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Vergil's Little Heroes, The Bees

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The bee and the ant are rivals in the ancient literatures as types of industry and thrift, but the higher praise on the part of the poets has been bestowed upon the bee, and for obvious reasons. The ant is largely a self-seeker, and as such, a potential enemy of the bee. She is frequently a genuine nuisance to man. The bee, on the other hand, will toil unceasingly, so long as the flowers are in bloom and her hive is spacious enough, to fill the comb with honey, thereby not only feeding herself but storing up much extra nectar for the use of her owner. Moreover, when the bee plays the role of robber, she raids a neighboring hive for its honey; she does not invade the province of some alien animal, as does the ant.¹

The book of *Proverbs* long ago exhorted the slothful man, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise." Horace pointed to the ant as the type of thriftiness when he warned the miser that one should learn to make use of and enjoy that which one has gained by toil; but Horace was at that time composing the *Satires*. When he turned to the higher style of the *Odes* he compared himself to a Matinian bee, which flits from flower to flower, gathering nectar wherever it can. Horace was at the time contrasting his humble labors with the majestic flights of Pindar, whom he calls the "Theban swan." This led the late Professor Gildersleeve to speak of Horace's "poetic hive-work." Pindar loved to describe poetry as "honey-sweet words," a practice which suggests that even his proud soul would not disdain to think in terms of "poetic hive-work." We recall, too, that when the Children of Israel were exhorted to be brave and long-suffering, their leaders promised them as their future home a "land flowing with milk and honey." In one of the most beautiful of the *Psalms* we are told that "the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

And so it is that poet, prophet and philosopher have united in extolling the bee and her product as synonymous with the highest, not only in human endeavor but among divine gifts. A modern writer points to the fact that all the famous beekeepers have enjoyed extremely long life—because they ate much honey.²

It is not at all strange that Vergil placed at the end of the *Georgics* his description of the character and habits of the bee. The fourth book is the climax of his most finished poem, and, with the third, it is the longest of the books. In point of time of composition it followed the *Bucolics*, those delightful sketches of country life. In the first book of the *Georgics* Vergil discusses agriculture with the signs and seasons that the Italian farmer

must observe with special care. In the second book his theme is trees and horticultural processes. The third book begins a new subject and treats of animals, both those which are the friends and those which are the enemies of man. It ends in a dark picture, as the poet describes a devastating plague which once afflicted Noricum and the district about the river Timavus. Vergil's willingness to devote all of the fourth book to the bees, at once suggests his great interest in, and familiarity with these tiny creatures; and he bestows much affection upon them, as he portrays their many human qualities. Vergil's bees seem to be little people and not members of a lower order than man; but if little in stature they are mighty in deed.

The sources of Vergil's inspiration in the fourth *Georgic* were several: the extensive literary tradition surrounding the bee and her honey, with which the poet undoubtedly was wholly familiar; Vergil's own early years at Mantua on his father's farm, where bees became familiar objects to him; but in particular, I should like to suggest, the picture of the atoms which Lucretius presents in his poem, wherein the atoms behave much like people and act as if possessed of human characteristics. If these countless atoms, which can not be seen or touched, and are so individualistic, deserve the degree of attention and even affection which Lucretius bestows upon them,³ how much more deserving are the bees, whose golden bodies reflect their presence as they speed through the air, and whose very activities indicate that now the happiest season of the year has returned.

Only a meticulously careful reading of the fourth *Georgic* reveals its true literary excellence. Personification is employed freely, for, as Vergil declares, the life of the bees suffers the same fortunes as belong to our own human life (251 f.):

Si vero, quoniam casus apibus quoque nostros,
vita tulit, tristi languebunt corpora morbo—

Moreover, this race of bees is extremely old, but immortal. It dwells in cities which are governed by strict laws, reveres its fatherland and its fixed abodes. It numbers generation upon generation. Jupiter himself was its creator (149-155, 206-209). The bees are said to dwell in huts of a kind to recall the simple, primitive houses which constituted the homes of the primitive Romans themselves (33-50).⁴

When swarming takes place, it is described, first, as a perfectly normal procedure; afterwards, as a battle led by rival kings (57-97).⁵ Here we meet a quiet scene, which is followed by the contrasted active scene. Figurative language abounds throughout these verses. The selection of a queen (103-115) is followed by a charming picture of the planting of a splendid garden for the bees (116-148). Like the Persian kings of old, or even like the gods, the bees must have provided for them a *paradeisos*.⁶ This is still regarded as one aspect of sound apiculture—to provide shade, water, and other necessities

for the bees, such as proximity to flowers.⁷

The preceding passage seems to be inserted as a kind of *praeteritio*, for thereafter Vergil resumes his description of the daily life of the bees, in which he portrays their communal life (149-178). To add variety, Vergil first depicts an active scene, which is followed by a quiet scene, an order reversed, as compared with his treatment of swarming (57-97) noted above. Most striking, however, is the observation (149-152) that the bees possess semi-divine dispositions (compare 218-227), which tells us that the bees are technical *heroes*; hence, their stock is of great antiquity (compare 206-209).

The various duties of the bees are definitely assigned (179-196), their virgin-birth is described (197-209), the myth of the king-bee is told,⁸ and the query is put, whether the bees may not be immortal (218-227). In the last two passages Vergil applies the Stoic doctrine of the *anima mundi*, as he does in the *Aeneid*.⁹

Next follows a discussion of honey (228-250). Illness among the bees and its remedies are considered (251-280); then the proper method of generating a new hive after disease has done its worst. This is in the form of a story, and brings the book to a close, including much that is purely traditional belief and introducing the myth of the early shepherd Aristaeus (281-314). This Aristaeus was successful in discovering a new method of restoring his lost bees and, as a result, was credited with a hard-won invention (315-332). Vergil's account of Aristaeus' quest is a long one and introduces to us a somewhat complicated myth within a myth, for it takes us from Thesaly to the coast of northern Africa and even to the bottom of the sea, where dwells Aristaeus' mother, Cyrene, surrounded by her nymphs (333-382).¹⁰ The mythical element is justified, however, not only because Aristaeus was a figure of ancient legend, but because the bees, as we have already observed, are *heroes*, whose family lines can be traced to remote antiquity. Aristaeus' wanderings are developed into a genuine *labor*, not unlike one of Heracles, or the post-Trojan wanderings of Menelaus; for he must visit old Proteus¹¹ and from him learn why his bees were lost (384-452). Aristaeus is successful in wringing a prophecy from Proteus, who reveals the cause of the misfortune, namely, an involuntary sin committed by Aristaeus himself (481-527). This introduces a tragic element into the story and unexpectedly involves Aristaeus in the famous legend of Orpheus and his search for Eurydice, his journey to the nether world, and his subsequent death at the hands of the Cicones. Then, true to his character, Proteus suddenly disappears. But what of the remedy that Aristaeus must still discover? Of this he learns from his mother, Cyrene; how from the carcass of a calf that has been beaten to death, bees will be generated spontaneously (530-558). Aristaeus forthwith obeys his mother's directions, finds a calf, and has it ceremonially flogged, when lo, a miracle! From within the carcass of the dead animal a buzzing sound is heard, the hide begins to undulate from the countless bees imprisoned within, the little creatures fly out in a great swarm and suspend themselves from a lofty tree. His bees have been restored! The book thus ends in a picture of success.

Vergil's readiness to devote so elaborate a myth to explain how a hive of bees can be restored, suggests the

high order to which the bees belong. They may be tiny creatures in body, but for the origin of their stock they go back to remote antiquity, which elicits the interest even of a sea goddess. Later, in the *Aeneid*, the poet drew heavily upon the phraseology of this book of the *Georgics*, as becomes clear at once when one compares, in particular, Aeneas' visit to the nether world. (Aen. 6. 304 ff.) with Orpheus' journey to the same region (*Georg.* 4. 467-482), and Aeneas' loss of Creusa (Aen. 2. 735-795) with Orpheus' loss of Eurydice (*Georg.* 4. 481-527). Aristaeus' visit to Proteus recalls Menelaus' consultation of the same eccentric seer (Homer, *Od.* 4. 347-570); Aristaeus' mother reminds the reader of Thetis, mother of Achilles, and Aristaeus himself appears at the opening of the *Georgics* (1. 14f.) as a divinity of Ceos to whom white bulls are offered in sacrifice.¹²

Additional echoes of this book are found in the description of the hard work of the bees and their carefully assigned tasks (165-169), which was the inspiration of Vergil's vivid picture portraying Dido's building operations in the new Carthage, which are compared with the busy work of the bees (Aen. 1. 430-436). This active life of the bees appears later in the description of the giant Cyclopes at work in Mount Aetna (Aen. 8. 416-438). Little wonder, then, that Vergil should exclaim (176-178; cf. 1-7):

non aliter, si parva licet componere magnis,
Cecropias innatus apes amor urguet habendi¹³
munere quamque suo.

This passage suggests, among other things, that Vergil was thinking of the famous Attic bees.

This hasty survey of the fourth *Georgic* can serve merely to suggest a few of the literary qualities of the poem. The book begins simply, but ends in the grand style, and is worthy not only to close the *Georgics*, but to bind in a close unity those poems and the earlier *Bucolics*. It seems highly appropriate, therefore, to find Vergil's "seal" added in the last four verses of the fourth book:

Illo Vergilium me tempore dulcis alebat
Parthenope, studiis florentem ignobilis oti,
carmina qui lusi pastorum audaxque iuventae,
Tityre, te patulae cecini sub tegmine fagi.

¹For knowledge concerning bees I am indebted to George De Clyver Curtis, *Bees' Ways*, Boston, 1948. This book is the work of an experienced beekeeper of California and contains many witty comments on the "human" side of the bees. References to Vergil appear on pp. 65, 79, 172, 182. I have read with profit also W. C. Allee, *The Social Life of Animals*, New York, 1938, pp. 259-265, for bees and ants. It is the female of both bees and ants that carries on the normal affairs of the hive or colony. ²Curtis, *op. cit.* pp. 223-227. ³See esp. *de Rerum Natura*, 2 and 1. 919. In contrast to the fourth *Georgic*, the second book of the *de Rerum Natura* has a pessimistic close. Lucretius' many comparisons and descriptions, which he employs to set forth clearly his concept of the atoms, often remind one of the Homeric simile, which performs a similar function.

⁴These verses are modelled in part on Hesiod, *Theog.* 594-599, and in part on Homer, *Od.* 13. 102-106, but the shapes of the huts as they are described by Vergil suggest the early Roman hut-urns; cf. also Varro, *de Re Rustica*, 3. 16, 12. The passage cited from Homer portrays a natural grotto where the bees locate their home, but Hesiod pictures the hive. There is no real distinction, however, between "tame" and "wild" bees, since bees are never "tamed"; Curtis, *op. cit.* p. 183. ⁵Vergil must have known that bees do not have kings, although he mentions the latter many times (verses 4, 68, 75, 95, 106, 210, 212). He speaks of the "king" in one case, probably, because he is thinking of the floats seen in the public processions at Rome (verses 3-5; cf. Horace, *Epist.* 1. 19, 23), and in another because he has in mind the busts of ancestors that were preserved in Roman houses

(208 f.; cf. Horace, *Odes* 3. 3. 42). In a third passage (210-218) he compares the bees' regard for their "king" with the same feeling as found in Egypt, Lydia, and among the Parthians and Medes. For the queen bee and her function, see Curtis, *op. cit.*, passim; Allee, *op. cit.* pp. 260-264. The latter describes the *castes* of the bee, which are composed of queen, male (drone), and worker (female); see pp. 260, f., 274. ⁶Dorothy Burr Thompson, HESPERIA, Jr. of the *Am. School of Class. Studies at Athens* 6 (1937). 400-425, describes the "garden of Hephaestus," which was a decorative feature about the *Hephaestum* ("Theseum") at Athens, appealing to *Georgics* 4. 130 ff., for illustration. This suggests that the bees are deserving, in Vergil's view, of a sacred garden, as was the god at Athens. ⁷Curtis, *op. cit.* 121-133. ⁸See above, note 5. ⁹See *Aen.* 6. 724-751. ¹⁰Cyrene's home is in the sea (333-386), with which abode cf. the cave of Thetis, *Iliad* 18. 35-38, 50, 65, 141. The nymphs who surround Cyrene belong to forest and stream alike. For Thetis' nymphs, see *Iliad*, 18. 39-49; Hesiod, *Theog.* 240-264. ¹¹According to Herodotus, 2. 112-120, Proteus was an Egyptian king of Memphis who belonged to the time of the Trojan war. For the type of journey here described by Vergil, cf. Rhys Carpenter, *Folk Tale, Fiction and Saga in the Homeric Epics*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1946, pp. 98-100. Vergil's description is based on Homer, *Od.* 4. 347-570, Menelaus' consultation of Proteus concerning his own return home. ¹²Readers are familiar with the statement of Servius (on *Georg.* 4. 1) that the story of Orpheus was inserted by Vergil in place of his earlier praise of Cornelius Gallus, who had offended Augustus and subsequently took his own life. H. R. Fairclough, *The Love of Nature Among the Greeks and Romans*, London and New York, 1930, pp. 215-217, has suggested that the pathos of the story in verses 464 ff. of this *Georgic* may be due to Vergil's grief over the death of Gallus. ¹³A phrase similar to *amor habendi* is applied to the greedy Pygmalion in *Aen.* 1. 349. This motif occurs frequently in Horace, particularly in the *Satires*.

Sophocles

HERBERT EDWARD MIEROW

Do nightingales still sing by white Colonus?
Does the narcissus bloom in early spring?
Is all so fair as all was wont to be:
The golden crocus, ivy, and the vine,
The precinct of the Awful Presences?
Do flowers bloom today in old Colonus,
Near shining Athens of the violet crown?

Mauve twilight whispers to the wine-dark sea.
The untouched goddess of the Moon looks down
On soaring columns of Olympian Zeus,
On fragments of the shattered Parthenon,
On tomb-stones of the unforgotten dead,
And on the spot at Deceleia where,
So long ago, they laid him down to sleep,
The brother of the glorious nightingale!

In the *Latin Week Bulletin* published in January, 1949 by the Committee on Educational Policies of CAMWS, Professor Clyde Murley has done a very neat, informative, and entertaining job in some fifteen pages under the main heads of "Roman Red-Letter Days" and "Taking the Greeks and Romans Apart." The comparative characterization of Greeks and Romans is not only very amusing, but rests on wide knowledge and fine perspective. Students will enjoy and appreciate this *tour-de-force* thoroughly; teachers will pronounce it a real treat. This attractive fifth-anniversary *Latin Week Bulletin* may be had from Professor Murley at 629 Noyes St., Evanston, Ill. The price is 10c for single copies; 7c each for 25 to 99; 5c each for 100 or more.

CORRECTION: CB 25.8, col. 1, line 31: Read *escensionem* for *ascensionem*.

The Mind of an Ordinary Athenian

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The great thinkers of ancient Greece need no apology. Plato and Aristotle still retain their eminent position. Thucydides is not inferior to any subsequent historian in analytical insight. No roll-call of great orators would be complete without the name of Demosthenes at its head. Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides remain unsurpassed. Many of the old poets from Homer to Pindar to Theocritus still stand in the forefront of their kind. It is not these and other great names that concern me here; rather, I am thinking of the "ordinary" Athenian, the nameless and forgotten man in the street. What was his mental equipment? Was he dull and greatly inferior to the prominent people of his day? In striving to answer such and similar questions, it occurred to me that I might find a tentative answer by examining the mental qualities of the ancient Athenian jurymen. The jury was large. Surely it did not consist of the better minds of that day, which were employed in more important and gainful occupations. The jurymen considered themselves a committee of the democratic state. They were by and large the ordinary people, and in some cases doubtless represented the lowest social stratum of the free citizens. Let us see what we can learn about these ordinary, every-day Athenians.

In his *Wasps*, Aristophanes has portrayed an ancient Athenian jurymen in a most amusing manner. Old Philocleon, obsessed with a passion for judging and condemning in court both the innocent and the guilty alike, is kept under guard in his son's home: the house is covered with a hunting net, while two slaves keep watch. In vain the vehement old dicast tries to make his escape by every conceivable way of egress. About midnight, fellow-dicasts appear on their way to court. They summon Philocleon, learn of his plight, and promise to assist him. A debate ensues between Philocleon and his son, in which the band of dicasts become the judges. Finally Bdelycleon, the son, succeeds in persuading his father to terminate his services as a jurymen in the regular Athenian courts, and to set up a domestic tribunal in his home instead. The first malefactor to come before this new court is the hound, Labes. The old man's passion for condemning has not abated, and it is only the son's trickery that frees the poor animal. Overwhelmed by the thought that he has acquitted a possible victim, the old man no longer considers himself competent to act as a judge. He now becomes preeminent among the feasters and merry-makers of Athens.

This is indeed, an uncomplimentary picture of an Athenian jurymen: he is represented as being dull-witted, unjust, and mentally unbalanced. Of course, Aristophanes was a comic poet, and as such he must not be taken too seriously. Although it is not to be denied that Aristophanes was protesting against certain evils that actually existed in the Athenian judiciary at that time, it is clear that he is resorting to caricature and exaggeration.

More damaging contemporary testimony with reference to the mental equipment of the ancient Athenian dicasts seems to be contained in the extant speeches of the Attic orators. Aeschines, for example, frequently accuses

Demosthenes of falsifying dates and events which, it would seem, ought to have stood out clearly in the minds of alert judges. At the same time Aeschines himself makes blunders in historical facts which seem to have escaped the notice of both Demosthenes and the jurors. Facts of contemporary history obviously became quickly confused in antiquity, sometimes even in the minds of those who had themselves taken an important part in them.¹ But the fact that the orator often contorted historical events without detection does not indicate that the jury was necessarily supine and stupid. The lack of a uniform report and the difficulty of access to official records often made it extremely hard for the masses to secure accurate information in the first place.

The orator Lysias² asserts that charges of anti-democratic conduct under the Four Hundred were in after-years brought against people who had been mere children during the oligarchy of 411 B. C. Such charges may have been brought, but there is no reason for believing that the dicasts failed to observe such incongruities.

The best index to the intelligence and mental alertness of an average Athenian jurymen seems to me to be contained in some of the speeches which he was obliged to hear, and which he doubtless comprehended. For example, all the extant speeches of Isaeus are hard to follow, unless a *stemma* is kept in constant view, and even then considerable rereading is necessary to insure a clear understanding of who is who and what is what. The following ancient summary of the tenth oration of Isaeus³ will reveal the intricate nature of a speech in an inheritance case:

Aristarchus was the father of four children, two sons, Cyronides and Demochares, and two daughters, including the mother of the plaintiff. Before he died, he appointed Cyronides the heir of his maternal grandfather, Xenaenetus, and left his other children as the heirs of his own estate. Demochares and one of his sisters died childless. Thus the whole estate of Aristarchus came by law to the plaintiff's mother, since she was the only surviving daughter. After the death of Aristarchus, his brother, Aristomenes, the legal guardian of the former's children, gave his own daughter in marriage to Cyronides, the emancipated son of Aristarchus, whose estate he promised to secure for him. Cyronides had a son, named Aristarchus, who was granted adoption by Aristomenes into the house of his grandfather, just as if the latter had so willed it. But the boy died young, and left the estate to his brother, Xenaenetus, according to the terms of his will. Under such circumstances, and with the younger Xenaenetus possessing the estate of the elder Aristarchus, the son of the surviving daughter instituted his suit, contending that he alone ought justly to take over the inheritance of the elder Aristarchus. For Cyronides, he maintains, had been emancipated; furthermore, the deceased had a legitimate son, Demochares, and therefore was not permitted by law to adopt another in his will; also, neither Demochares, who was under age, nor the sister, who had died previously, could introduce an adopted son to their father's family. Therefore, the admission of the younger Aristarchus to the property of the elder was illegal, and so the will of the person so admitted was invalid, since he could not give to another, what he himself did not legally possess. . . .

The following is a sample of the kind of argument that might be used in an inheritance case:⁴

If my mother, the daughter of Ciron, were still living, if her father had died intestate, and if this man had been his brother instead of his nephew, he would have the right to marry his daughter. But no man would have a right to her estate except her children, to whom the law would give it at the age of sixteen years. If then, were she alive, he would not have been entitled to her fortune, but her sons would have been the lawful heirs, it is evident that,

as she died leaving children, they only, and not these confederates should succeed to her possession.

After a long, involved exposition, which graduate students of today find hard to follow, even after they have worked out a careful translation, and have read the passage again and again, the speaker of Isaeus II, with no apparent desire to flatter the dicasts, concludes with these words:⁵

I believe that what has been said will be entirely sufficient for men of your sound understanding.

In Demosthenes' oration against *Leocrates* a brief paragraph gives a pedigree which is not easy to follow:⁶

To begin with, men of the jury, our common ancestor, Euthymachus of Otryne had three sons, Midylides and Archippus and Archiades; also, he had a daughter, Archidice. After their father had died, the brothers gave Archidice in marriage to Leostratus of Eleusis. One of the three brothers, Archippus, died while commanding a ship at Methymna. Soon thereafter Midylides marries Mnesimache, the daughter of Lysippus of Crioea. He has a daughter, Clitomache, whom he wished to give in marriage to his own brother, who was still a bachelor, but, since the brother did not wish to marry and therefore permitted the property to remain undivided while he continued to dwell by himself in Salamis, Midylides subsequently gives his daughter in marriage to Aristoteles of Pallene, my grandfather. To them three sons were born, Aristodemus, my father, who is here in court, and Habronichus, my uncle, and Midylides, who is now dead. Such, gentlemen of the jury, is our title to the family estate by proximity of blood.

The estate of Hagnias was an object of much dispute; the relatives were many and their claims involved. The relationship of at least twenty individuals had to be kept clearly in mind. To make matters worse, the plaintiff in his action against Macartatus complains that on a previous occasion he was not even able to explain the relationship to the jury as he had wished, since he had been allotted only a fifth part of the water.⁷ That it was not possible for a litigant to facilitate matters for the jury by presenting a *stemma* to the eye as well as to the ear is clear from the same oration:⁸

I planned at first, gentlemen of the jury, to represent the whole pedigree of Hagnias' family on a board, and in this manner to exhibit all the details before you, but then it occurred to me that all the jurymen would not have an equally good view, since those who sat farther away would not have the benefit of it.

The foregoing illustrations are, as has been noted, from Isaeus and Demosthenes, who wrote their speeches at a time when the courts were thoroughly democratic. Since Pericles had introduced pay for jury service, and especially since Cleon had raised this pay to three obols, it became possible for the man from the masses to serve as judge. Any citizen above thirty years of age and not otherwise disqualified was subject to jury service and could afford to give it. A jurymen, therefore, was a good representative in every respect of the great mass of the people; he possessed no intellectual superiority, nor any other innate or acquired advantage over his fellows. He was chosen by lot annually. Mental alertness and intelligence sufficient to follow passages of the sort that have been quoted must, therefore, be assigned to the average Athenian citizen of classical times. It is unfair to maintain that a jury usually was acquainted with the pedigree of a litigant from previous knowledge. The family tree of a rich or prominent house might be well known to most citizens of even so large a city as Athens, but certainly many inheritance suits were brought by more or less obscure families. When Demosthenes contemplated

drawing a *stemma* and showing it to the judges, he clearly did not assume any previous knowledge of his litigant's pedigree on the part of the judges. On the other hand, the theory may be put forth that the jurors were unable to follow intricate cases and that they voted without a clear understanding of the situation. But under such circumstances justice would have been a matter of chance, and it is obvious that the beneficiary in a large estate would have settled all disputes involving it out of court, rather than hazard the loss of everything as a result of a chance verdict. Litigants had confidence in the courts, even when their cases were intricate. This is a high compliment to the mental equipment of an ancient jurymen and, consequently, also to the rank and file of the citizenry.

The work of Phidias is unequalled in the realm of art. Plato and Aristotle tax the minds of the greatest thinkers of our day. The greatest of the ancient Greeks were our superiors in art, and at least our equals in intelligence. And the average Athenian could very easily have held his own with his modern counterpart in any fair, mental-alertness test devised by the Department of Psychology.

¹Cf. Edw. Meyer, *Forschungen*, 2. 132ff. ²30. 7f. ³On the estate of Aristarchus. It is to be kept in mind that all the extant speeches of Isaeus deal with testamentary litigation. ⁴Isaeus 8. 31. ⁵Section 19. ⁶Sections 9-10. ⁷Demosthenes vs. *Macaratus*, 9. ⁸*Ibid.*, 18.

A Note on the Egyptian Horus (Harpocrates)

If the dog-faced Horus (or "Harpocrates," as he is more often called by Latin writers), son of Isis and Osiris, was the favorite god of the Egyptians in the early Christian era, as is frequently stated by various authors, we should expect that the early Christian writers would have had frequent occasion to combat his cult, especially since his worship continued at least down into the middle of the fourth century, as is testified by Athanasius. A careful search, however, in all the Greek and Latin writers of the first six centuries in Migne's *Patrologiae Cursus Completus* (supplemented by the volumes in the *Loeb Series*, the *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, the *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, and other available English, Latin, and Greek editions of individual Fathers) has revealed only fourteen references (eleven by name) to Horus: two in the 3rd century, nine in the 4th, and three in the 5th. The citations follow.

LATIN WRITERS

1. Tertullian, *Adversus Gentes*, cap. 6 (Migne, Ser. Lat. tom. 1, col. 305). The text refers to a previous Roman ban against the Egyptian deities which was later relaxed.
2. Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, cap. 21 (Migne, Ser. Ia, tom. 3, 303). The author ridicules the cult of the son of Isis which mourns for the object of its worship.
3. Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones*, lib. 1: *de falsa religione*, cap. 21 (Migne, Ser. Ia, tom. 6, col. 235). The writer seems to confuse Harpocrates with Osiris.
4. St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 18.5 (Migne, Ser. Lat., tom. 41, col. 564). Augustine here seems to hold the rather common opinion that Harpocrates with his finger in his mouth—the conventional Egyptian manner of depicting children—is admonishing men to keep silence.

GREEK WRITERS

1. Eusebius of Caesarea (a) *Praeparatio Evangelica*, lib. 2, cap. 1, 46 (Migne, Ser. Graec., tom. 21, 96). (b) *Ibid.* lib. 3, cap. 12, 116 (Migne, *ibid.*, tom. 21, 209). (c) *Ibid.* lib. 3, cap. 11, 113 (Migne, *ibid.*, tom. 21, 201). (d) *Ibid.* lib. 2, cap. 1, 50 (Migne, tom. 21, 101). The references are to Egyptian theology, the meaning of the name "Horus", and the various animals worshipped in Egypt.
2. St. Athanasius, (a) *Contra Gentes*, 7-8 (Migne, Ser. Graec., tom. 25, col. 19). (b) *Ibid.* 9 (Migne, *ibid.* col. 23). The passages show that the pagan gods were men and died.
3. St. Gregory Nazianzen, *Carmina* lib. 2: *historica* sec. 1: *Poemata de seipso*, vv. 838-840 (Migne, Ser. Graec. Prior, tom. 37, 719, col. 1087). A series of names of Egyptian gods.
4. Epiphanius, *Ancoratus*, 107 (Migne, Ser. Graec. Pr., tom. 43, col. 207). The idea of Harpocrates being a god is ridiculed because of his antecedents.
5. Synesius of Cyrene, (a) *Aegyptius sive de Providentia*, lib. 1, 105 (Migne, Ser. Graec. Pr., tom. 66, col. 1242). (b) *Ibid.* lib. 1, 115 (Migne, *ibid.* col. 1258.)

Most of these references to Horus are in passages more or less apologetical in character; some are quite incidental. Perhaps this lack of more numerous references to him may be explained by the fact that he was usually honored in connection with Isis and Osiris, his parents. The writings of the early Christian Fathers contain far more references to these two; and it may be that when they mention Isis and Osiris they also have Harpocrates in mind, but do not mention him by name because it was universally known how closely he was connected with the other two.

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NOTICE ABOUT CB INDEX, VOL. 1-25

As previously announced, an Index of the CLASSICAL BULLETIN, covering volumes 1 to 25, is in preparation and will be ready in May. This Index will preserve the format which the CB has thus far maintained, so that it will be possible to bind it in conveniently at the end of vol. 25 (which volume, of course, will have its own customary one-page annual index).

Because of the very high cost of printing, a charge of 50c will be made for this 25-year Index, to help defray at least part of the cost of production.

Subscribers will oblige us very much if they will NOTIFY THE BUSINESS EDITOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WHETHER THEY WANT THE INDEX TO VOLS. 1-25, and if so, whether they want one or more copies of it.

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Again Translations *

Those of us who have had the privilege of a good classical education often vividly recall in later years the thrill we got from our first contact with authors like Horace, Catullus, Plato, or Homer. It was like discovering a new world. And perhaps, under the stimulation of such a discovery, we became impatient with the snail's pace at which we seemed to be mastering real Greek and Latin, and went off on a search for more classics, but in translation. If so, what was the outcome of our quest? When we had located a translation—let us say, of Lucretius, or Sophocles, or Sappho—and with breathless expectation hungrily began to pore over it, how great was our disappointment! Perhaps our disillusionment was so complete as to breed in us a prejudice against some great writer from which it took us years to recover.

Arlo Bates, in a passage quoted in CLASSICAL BULLETIN 23. 27, says that to him the paraphrasing of masterpieces of poetry is nothing less than a sacrilege, because "it degrades the work of art in the mind of the child, and contradicts the fundamental principle that poetry exists solely because it expresses what cannot be adequately said in any other way." If this be true of *paraphrasing* poetry, how much more true is it of attempting to *translate* poetry (or any high, imaginative literature) into another language! If anyone but an artist of genius sets his hand to such a task, the outcome is usually monstrous. And even the most gifted of writers (like Gilbert Murray or J. T. Sheppard), whilst they may produce works that are true poetry in their own right, cannot (except in short passages) produce adequate *translations* of Euripides or Sophocles. Poetry is untranslatable. Great names in literature have tried their hand on Horace; but what *translation* of an entire Ode of Horace exists that you would care to look at a second time?

A person who knows no French reads somewhere of the exquisite charm of French poetry. He gets himself an anthology of "the hundred best poems of French literature done into English verse." After a few pages, what is his reaction? Likely enough he will say, "If this stuff is the best French poetry there is, I'll be glad to get along without any of it." Haven't we felt a little bit that way ourselves, if, for some reason or other, we have been condemned on occasion to plow through the pages of an anthology of Greek and Roman Literature in translation? Read even Demosthenes, or Cicero, or Plautus, in

some of the preferred translations available today: what a degradation of literature! Here, one should think—as in the case of Plato, Thucydides, and other prose writers—some sort of approach to the effect of the originals ought to be possible, even if it is impossible in the case of high poetry. Yet, take the best versions extant of the *Crown* or *Third Philippic*, of the *pro Milone*, of any Plautine comedy—how different, how inadequate, how utterly disappointing to one who knows the original, and how flat to one who doesn't! With only such translations to go by, well may the person without Greek or Latin exclaim, "Is *this* great literature?—Keep your classics and give me Winston Churchill and Bernard Shaw!"

Whilst, however, in general, translations as literature are drab, uninspiring, and misleading, it is not bad to use the *best* ones if one has at least a good elementary knowledge of Greek and Latin. To have read even a few hundred lines of Homer in the original, will make all the difference when one comes to use a careful, literary translation for further reading. One can then, to some extent, supply what is wanting, and confront the inadequacies of the version with the original text. This is notably true of Attic tragedy, of which, moreover, translations and adaptations of considerable merit and dignity exist in English. But it is also true of philosophy: Plato and Aristotle often seem to be saying quite different things in translations from what the Greek text obviously signifies.

In view of these considerations, would it not be wiser and more worth while to channel college students who cannot or will not give any time to the study of the Greek and Latin languages, into substantial courses on ancient civilization, history, philosophy, politics, and art, rather than advise them to take courses in Greek and Roman *literature* (?) in translation? Such courses, it is true, have not the same high educational and cultural value as a thorough study in the original of the great books of Greece and Rome; but then, they are not so apt to disappoint, or even disgust, the student either, and they certainly can be made interesting and extremely valuable to college men, no matter what their special talents or interests. Besides, in any solid course in, let us say, Greek history, or philosophy, or art, or political and social ideas, students will always be assigned collateral reading in the sources, and that means that they will get some acquaintance with the best translations of Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, Lucretius, Cicero, and the rest. Moreover, any "general" education worthy of the name should surely include some contact with works of such enduring value and influence in the Western world as, for instance, the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Aeneid*; and to serve this need many excellent modern books exist, which present the story, the ideas, and a good deal of the actual text of these masterpieces in really attractive form. Rather let Latinless and Greekless moderns get their impressions of ancient classical literature from these intelligible and appealing books than from the wearying toil of wading through full-scale translations, which are too often not literature at all, and at best only caricatures of Greek and Roman artistic achievement.

F. A. P.

*On this subject cfr. also CB 23.25; 23.28; 24.18; 25.1; 25.6.

The Letters of Lupus of Ferrières

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During the course of the Middle Ages the intellectual life never became completely extinct but continued to survive somewhere, often in widely separated places. From Italy Roman learning spread to Africa and Spain, to Ireland and Britain, and finally returned across the channel to the continent. Early in the seventh century Irish missionaries, notably St. Columban and St. Gall, brought to France and Northern Italy the survivals of Roman culture. A century later the Venerable Bede, who had digested and recorded much of the learning of his day, found worthy successors in St. Boniface, who carried the tradition of scholarship to Germany, and Alcuin, whom Charlemagne invited to France to assume leadership of the palace school. Alcuin's brilliant pupil, Hrabanus Maurus, who became abbot of Fulda and later archbishop of Mainz, perpetuated in Germany this intellectual heritage.

Hrabanus Maurus numbered among his leading pupils Servatus Lupus, commonly known as Lupus of Ferrières. He was born in the diocese of Sens in the early part of the ninth century of a family distinguished in both church and state. To him is ascribed the authorship of a collection of letters, the majority of which either bear his own name or can with reasonable certainty be identified as his. The collection of some 130 letters includes over 100 composed by Lupus himself.¹

These letters cover a wide range of subjects. Not only do they present an intimate picture of the life and personality of the author himself, but they reflect the cultural and political developments of his age.

The first letter addressed to Einhard, the famous biographer of Charlemagne, gives an account of the author's education and reveals his keen love of learning. "A love of literature," he says, "sprang up in me in my earliest youth, . . . and if a lack of teachers had not thwarted my purpose, I could perhaps with God's help have satisfied my craving." When consideration is given to the general tendency in the Middle Ages for the pious to scorn a classical or liberal education except as a necessary preparation for a theological career, it is gratifying to discover Lupus voicing the opinion that knowledge should be sought for its own sake (*mihi satis apparet propter se ipsam appetenda sapientia*). Encouraged and assisted by Aldric, abbot of the monastery of Ferrières, which lay some sixty miles southeast of Paris, he began his eager quest for learning. This good abbot, whom Lupus later (*Ep.* 41)² calls his master and foster-father (*dominus ac nutritor*), introduced the young man to a course of study in the liberal arts. The program of instruction with its emphasis on grammar and rhetoric was not entirely to his liking, and the works of contemporary writers displeased him because they lacked so utterly the grandeur of Cicero and all the other classical writers. As a further step in his education, he was sent by Aldric to Fulda for instruction in theology under the capable direction of Hrabanus Maurus. Here he spent several profitable years in study, and probably wrote his *Life of Saint Wigbert*, concerning which he writes a dedicatory letter to the abbot of the monastery of Hersfeld (*Ep. Append.* 1).

The years at Fulda afforded Lupus an excellent opportunity to mingle with kindred spirits. The proximity of Fulda to Seligenstadt, where Einhard was in retirement, permitted him to cultivate the friendship of the latter, whose *Life of Charlemagne* stimulated Lupus with a strong desire to meet the author, and for whom he always held the highest regard. Einhard's dedication to Lupus of his little book *On the Adoration of the Cross* shows that the relationship was mutual. We have four letters addressed to Einhard and one response. The first letter, while shedding much light on the early education and literary tastes of Lupus, was professedly a request to gain a closer acquaintance and more intimate friendship with Einhard, but in reality, to judge from what we learn in other letters about his eager desire for books, Lupus sought through this letter an opportunity to ask for certain books, a request which seemed to him less difficult to make than that for friendship. Among the manuscripts desired were certain rhetorical writings of Cicero, a commentary on Cicero's works, and the *Attic Nights* of Aulus Gellius. This did not exhaust the number of books which he wished to borrow from Einhard's library, but modesty forbade that he ask for more until these were returned. The fact that Lupus promises in a letter written at a later date (*Ep.* 5) to return to Einhard certain books, indicates that his request met with success. Lupus seems to have placed the highest confidence in Einhard's scholarship, seeking his counsel freely in subjects as diverse as arithmetic and grammar.

After several years in study at Fulda, Lupus returned in 836 to Ferrières, where he served faithfully as monk until his election and elevation to the abbacy a few years later. The correspondence of this period indicates great activity on the part of Lupus. To a friend he writes (*Ep.* 36): "If you had surprised me with a visit, you would have found me so engrossed in various unavoidable matters, that for many days I could not have given you a single hour's attention." In another letter (*Ep.* 6) of this period he mentions his introduction the year before to the emperor, Louis the Pious, and Judith, the queen, and his cordial reception by them. He speaks of the queen's strong influence and seems flattered by her invitation for him to return to the palace. "Many think," he hopefully adds, "that some high position will soon be conferred upon me." If, however, he had in mind advancement to the abbacy, he must have been disappointed, for he was obliged to wait about five years for that promotion. In a letter (*Ep. Append.* 2), apparently of this period, addressed to Waldo, abbot of St. Maximin of Trèves, he promises to write a life of St. Maximinus, a work which he completed in 839. As Lupus was perhaps the best educated of the members of his monastery, the task of writing letters for the abbot and the body of monks often fell to him. Hence several letters appear in his collection under the name of Odo, the abbot of Ferrières, or of the entire community.

At last, for some reason or other, Odo came into ill favor with the king, Charles the Bald, and was forced to retire from his position as Abbot of Ferrières. The abbacy was then given to Lupus by vote of the brethren and the favor of Charles (*Ep.* 40). The monastery at this time was in a critical condition as a result of war and famine. The new abbot complains bitterly of the

meager income from the farms belonging to the monastery. He says (*Ep.* 21),

We have had a fair yield of wine and grain, and also of salt, but the sale of these has had to supply us with clothes and provide meager funds for the campaigns required by the state in these turbulent times. These things cause me so much anguish that the only thought that comes into my mind is this, 'Thou art my hiding-place; Thou shalt preserve me from trouble' (*Ps.* 32.7). For I am distracted on the one hand by the poverty of the brethren, and on the other by the need of money for the campaigns; and now that nearly all our possessions everywhere have been taken away or laid waste, I can find no relief anywhere except in God and my friends.

In his position as abbot, Lupus championed the cause of his monastery with the greatest conscientiousness. The most conspicuous example of devotion to the material welfare of his people appears in his persistent effort to recover for the monastery the cell of St. Josse (*Ep.* 11). This subsidiary of the monastery of Ferrières, located in the northern part of France, had been originally assigned, according to Lupus, to Alcuin by Charlemagne to serve as a hospice, and was later given to the monastery of Ferrières by Louis the Pious at the request of Queen Judith. Provision was made that any surplus from the income of this cell should go to the brethren at Ferrières. But this newly acquired possession was soon lost and became a veritable political football. It first fell into the hands of an unscrupulous man named Rhuoding, who, Lupus tells us (*Ep.* 11), obtained it in some fraudulent way from Lothair; then Charles the Bald turned it over to a recalcitrant count named Odulf to gain his loyalty. Lupus speaks (*Ep.* 88) of the dangerous rapacity of this count, and accuses him of having left nothing at St. Josse except the bare ground (*Ep.* 43). In a letter of a later date (*Ep.* 55) he mentions, evidently with some degree of hope, the illness of Odulf. "Odulf," he says, "is said to be ill, yet not so dangerously ill as to consider it a warning to reform, as we should desire, nor so desperately ill as to die, which we should regret on account of his very certain damnation." Not only were letters written to influential friends to intercede for the recovery of this cell, but they were written directly to Charles himself. These letters to the king were always courteous and respectful, yet straightforward and monitory in tone. Lupus portrays vividly and pathetically the destitution of his monastery which resulted from the loss of this unit. (*Ep.* 71).

The servants of God, who pray constantly for you, have now for three years failed to receive their usual supply of clothes and have been forced for the most part to wear ragged and patched garments. They live on purchased vegetables, and very seldom have the satisfaction of eating fish and cheese; their servants too no longer receive their due allotment of clothing, for all of these provisions were furnished us from this cell.

The plight of the brothers of Ferrières is even more vividly portrayed in a letter to Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims (*Ep.* 42):

The loss which has come to our monastery is familiar to you. I refer to the fact that the king has taken away from us without any fault of mine the cell which his father decreed to us because he realized that the monastic life could not continue among us without the aid of additional resources. For this reason we have been reduced to such a state of privation that this year's food supply is scarcely adequate for two months. Our servants, whose help is indispensable, are reduced almost to nakedness, and there is nothing we can do for them. Most of the brethren are compelled to cover their nakedness with ragged and torn clothes. We are forced by poverty to re-

strict our hospitality, and, in this troubled period of the state, having spent what our predecessors saved, we ask of the king mercy and of our common Lord endurance.

Loyalty to his monks and fear of incurring the charge of instability alone kept Lupus from resigning his office. He naturally felt that his monastery deserved better consideration from the king, out of respect to his own personal loyalty to him, and that the best part should not have been turned over to a worldly person to be destroyed rather than governed. About a year later another letter (*Ep.* 45), written in a similar vein, was sent to the king. In the introduction Lupus quotes Matthew, 5.7, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy," and he cautions the king to show mercy to the needy, that God may be merciful to him. The letter closes with an exhortation to the young king to fear and love God, "who is not mocked (*Gal.* 6. 7)." In these letters bearing on the question of the cell of St. Josse, one is deeply impressed not only by the sympathetic attitude of the abbot towards the welfare of his monks, but by the moral earnestness with which he pleads their cause. That his untiring efforts to regain the cell finally met with success, is seen in a letter to Altsig, bishop of York, in which he speaks of it as finally under the control of the monastery (*Ep.* 13).

The letters of Lupus bear witness to a very active public life. Many trips were taken to the court and to various public assemblies. Lupus was called upon to serve in the army, and was taken captive in the Aquitanian campaign of 844, barely escaping with his life. (*Epp.* 90, 91). But this was a field of activity for which he had a great distaste, and he felt, as well he might, that his services were more valuable in the things of the mind and spirit. In a letter (*Ep.* 78) probably written a few years later, he begs a friend to exert his influence in his behalf with the king, to gain exemption from service in a campaign that was about to be launched:

I have not learned, as you know, how to strike an enemy or to parry a blow, and I am certainly unfamiliar with the execution of the duties of warfare, whether it be in the infantry or in the cavalry, and, in any case, it is not soldiers alone our king needs. In the event of an expedition I beg that he be instructed by word of admonition from you and, if necessary, from Hincmar that if he has no high regard for my intellectual interests he may at least condescend to have consideration for my way of life and to impose duties upon me which are not wholly inconsistent with it.

We may suppose that his request won favor with the king, for he was soon sent to Rome "to worship and to attend to certain ecclesiastical matters," as he states (*Ep.* 38).

Attention has already been called to our author's zest for learning and to his eagerness to secure books. Throughout his letters there is abundant evidence of the strong influence many writers both classical and patristic exerted on his writings. He quotes from Cicero, Sallust, Vergil, Horace, Seneca, Martial, Valerius Maximus, Servius, Donatus, Capen, Priscian, Boethius, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Cyprian, Gregory the Great, and Isidore. His letters show an acquaintance also with Caesar, Livy, Quintilian, Suetonius, Gellius, Macrobius, Josephus, and Cassiodorus. In addition to these writers, Lupus also makes much use of the Vulgate, the influence of which is evident on nearly every page of the *Epistolae* in the form of quotations or biblical phraseology. The quotations which Lupus draws from writings both secu-

lar and sacred are usually well-adapted and do not give an impression of patchwork. He seems to have assimilated much of the learning available in his day. He was willing, as he says of a contemporary writer, to admit Cicero, Vergil, and all the other eminent writers of the past into the company of the elect (*Ep.* 20). In the field of the Greek language and literature, however, he seems to have had scant training. He consults Einhard (*Ep.* 5) on the meaning of certain Greek words in Servius, and advises Gottschalk (*Ep.* 30), when he seeks information concerning a few Greek words, to consult the Greeks themselves for the exact shade of meaning. He does venture, however, in another letter (*Ep.* 20) addressed to Aleuin to discuss the accent of the Greek word *blasphemus*.

The most outstanding characteristic of Lupus of Ferrières, it would appear from his letters, is his ardent love of books and his eagerness to acquire them. Never did he let pass an opportunity to borrow books if there was the slightest possibility of success. This trait appears in his first letter written to Einhard, to which attention has been called. In a letter (*Ep.* 91) to Mareward, abbot of Prum, he requests a copy of Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars*, to be procured from Fulda and sent to him. "In this part of the country," he explains, "it is nowhere to be found." In another letter (*Ep.* 60) to this same person, he states that the abbot of Seligenstadt has promised to have a portion of a certain book copied and sent to him by Mareward's courier. He begs that this be speedily accomplished. To a monk of the monastery of Prum, who was later elevated to the abbacy, he writes (*Ep.* 72): "I shall collate the letters of Cicero which you have sent me with my own copy, in order that from these two manuscripts an accurate text may be produced." In this same letter he requests a copy of Cicero *On Aratus* to fill in lacunae in his own copy. From Altsig, abbot of York, he desires to obtain the following works (*Ep.* 62): *Quaestiones*, a work by Jerome on both the Old and the New Testaments, a similar work by Bede, Jerome's *Commentaries on Jeremiah* from book VI to the end, and the *Institutiones Oratoriae* of Quintilian. He promises to copy and return these works promptly. He hopes that some, if not all, of these works will reach him, and assures Altsig of his own continued good will toward him and of a reward from God for so great a kindness. This attempt to borrow books from the abbot of York must have failed, for in a letter (*Ep.* 103) to Pope Benedict, a few years later, we find a request for the same books and two others besides, Cicero's *De Oratore* and Donatus' *Commentary on Terence*. From other sources requests include the *Catiline* and *Jugurtha* of Sallust, the *Verrinae* of Cicero, the commentaries of Boethius on the *Topica* of Cicero, and, if we can determine from a very corrupt text, perhaps a copy of Livy (*Ep.* 74).

While Lupus was, as his letters so clearly indicate, an ardent lover of books and a persistent borrower, he was not, on the other hand, a willing lender. He was exceedingly adept in devising and causing delays. To one correspondent he writes (*Ep.* 20):

Since my return the book which you requested has been desired by many who do not deserve to have it. I have about decided, therefore, to have it put away somewhere lest it become lost. Perhaps you can get it when you come. I realized that it could have been intrusted to this clerk, since he enjoys your confidence, but I was surprised that it had not occurred to you that this would

be quite unsafe because he was traveling on foot.

Again, Lupus expresses to his friend, Hinemar, the fear of bandits as the reason for failing to send him a book (*Ep.* 76).

I was afraid to send you Bede's collection of abstracts on the Apostle from the works of St. Augustine, mainly because the book is so large that it cannot be easily concealed in the folds of a coat nor contained in a bag. And yet, if either were done, there was the fear of falling in with robbers, who would certainly have been attracted by the beauty of the book, and it would have become lost both to you and to me. If God wills, I shall therefore lend you this volume as soon as it is our good fortune to meet somewhere in safety.

The acquisition of books was indeed a passion with Lupus. He was interested not merely in getting possession of new texts, but in securing copies of texts which he already had, in order to collate and improve his own, a characteristic which, as Professor Beeson says,³ distinguished him from all the other scholars of the Middle Ages.

It is impossible within the limits of this paper to attempt a complete summary of the content of all the letters of Lupus of Ferrières. Many points of interest must be completely ignored. It seems desirable, for example, that his numerous diatribes on grammar and his theological discussions be passed over. Our chief interest has centered on those portions of his correspondence which illustrate the personality of the author in the light of his own age. We must not regard Lupus as a profound scholar or an original thinker, nor is it on that score that he claims our attention. He wins our esteem primarily because of his genuine devotion to the study of the classics and his overwhelming desire to pass on that heritage to succeeding generations. We find in him a typical example of the intelligent and painstaking scribe, wholeheartedly devoted to his calling. It is because of this profound appreciation which Lupus had for the classical tradition, more than anything else, that we owe him a debt of gratitude and regard him as one of the great humanists.

¹Cf. Levillain, *Loup de Ferrières, Correspondance*, Vol. I, intr. xi. ²The numbering of the letters is that of the edition of E. Dümmler, in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolae*, 6. 1-126. ³Beeson, Charles H., *Lupus of Ferrières as Scribe and Text Critic*, (Cambridge, 1930) 4.

Xenophon in the *Memorabilia*

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An interesting question concerning the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon is whether this work reflects Xenophon's own principles of conduct. At first sight it would seem that the principles of conduct illustrated in the *Memorabilia* can by no stretch of the imagination be called Xenophon's. Socrates is the person whose ideals and principles are the direct subject of the work. Xenophon stands merely as the biographer who presents the ideals and principles of Socrates. However, perhaps further reflection on the problem will disclose that the principles laid down in the *Memorabilia* are Xenophon's after all.

Being in the nature of a tribute to Socrates, the *Memorabilia* stands as an implicit statement of Xenophon's own interests in life and of his personal evaluation of things. For in Socrates and what Socrates stood for Xenophon evidently saw the embodiment of things he

himself prized and loved. This is especially true in view of the fact that Xenophon composed the *Memorabilia*, as Dakyns says,¹ long after the death of Socrates, and that in it Socrates is seen through the vista of years. Moreover, Xenophon's explicit endorsement of what Socrates stood for he himself expressed, not once only, to this effect: "Certainly to me, as I heard him utter these sentiments, it seemed that Socrates was happy himself and led those who listened to him to a good and upright life."² A good and upright life (*kalokagathia*) is Xenophon's own ideal, and Xenophon is one of those led to *kalokagathia* by Socrates. And again: "By expressing ideals such as these Socrates, it seems to me, caused his associates to refrain from what was impious, unjust, dishonorable."³ Clearly then, the ideals and principles of Socrates are likewise those of the admiring Xenophon.

The same is clear from Xenophon's avowed purpose in writing the *Memorabilia*, namely, in the words of Winans, "by a proper exposition of the life and doctrines of Socrates at once to vindicate his fame and extend the beneficent influence of his teachings to posterity."⁴ This doctrine which Xenophon wished to transmit to posterity he first made his own.

Further, the *Memorabilia* as biography and tribute reveals Xenophon's oft-noted interest in matters ethical. On this point Dionysius of Halicarnassus says of Xenophon:⁵ "He shows a character that is god-fearing, just, patient, facile — in a word, adorned with every kind of virtue." Lindsay calls attention to Xenophon's obvious enthusiasm for moral improvement and to his desire in the *Memorabilia* to give Socrates an eminently respectable character.⁶ The *Memorabilia*, thus, not only gives a clue to Xenophon's ethical interest and ideals, but according to one author, who supports the contention that in the *Memorabilia* there is much of Xenophon and practically nothing of Socrates,⁷ Xenophon put into the work only such knowledge of Socrates as he had himself obtained by first-hand contact with the master. This knowledge the author considers superficial and not indicative of close intimacy between the two men. Scarcely anything of Socrates in the *Memorabilia*, almost all Xenophon! But probably the position of Robbins comes nearer the truth, that Xenophon's delineation of the character of Socrates pictures the real, historic Socrates.⁸ Yet it remains true that Xenophon, while characterizing Socrates, writes into the pages of the *Memorabilia* his own heart and its aspirations.

Besides being biographer and admirer, Xenophon reveals himself to us in the *Memorabilia* in his disciple-master relationship to Socrates. If he received practically nothing from Socrates, as some few contend, no attention need be paid to this particular point. Then the *Memorabilia* contains only what is practically his own. But if he actually received much from Socrates — and the majority of scholars support this opinion — and if he is truly a *vir Socraticus*,⁹ the difficulty arises of distinguishing the thought of Xenophon from the thought of Socrates. A complete separation of the two is, and will probably always be, impossible. Clearly, on internal evidence one would have a difficult, and most likely an impossible, task to distinguish between the notions which are common to both men and those which belong to one or the other alone. Fortunately for us who are interested in Xenophon, so long as it is evident from Xenophon's

manner of acting in real life that these very ideals and principles are his, what difference does it make whether they were held by him alone, or by him and Socrates, or even by a thousand other men besides? Or does it make them any less his because Socrates held them before him and transmitted them to him? If then the evidence of the *Anabasis* is consulted as being extrinsic to the *Memorabilia*, and if it becomes manifest from Xenophon's conduct as seen in the *Anabasis* that the same ideals and principles which, according to the *Memorabilia*, Socrates taught were the mainspring of Xenophon's actions, then it may be safely concluded that those ideals and principles belong to Xenophon as well as to Socrates. That such is clearly the case, every student of the *Anabasis* can confirm; nor is there any need of laboring the point here.

One aspect of Greek education strengthens this conclusion. Lindsay says well that the Athenian mentality regarding knowledge and learning was that of the crafts in which they so abounded and excelled; and hence there was a true master-disciple relationship between teacher and learner. This was especially the mentality of Socrates, as can be legitimately inferred from his never-ending analogies with the crafts when discussing the acquisition of virtue. And this, Lindsay avers, was Xenophon's relationship to Socrates!¹⁰ Socrates was the hero of Xenophon and the best man Xenophon ever knew.¹¹ And Marshall shows that Xenophon was a hero-worshipper precisely because his heroes incorporated for him in a concrete form his own ideals.¹² Both in his conception of the character of the elder Cyrus, with which he took considerable fictional liberty in the *Cyropaedia*, and in the living, historical Socrates he knew and whom he professes to portray in the *Memorabilia*, Xenophon held up to himself and to the world representations of his own ideal man. Of his characterization of Cyrus, Winans, expressing the commonly-held opinion in the matter, says that Xenophon pictures in the training and life of the elder Cyrus his own ideal of a man fashioned after the Socratic model and brought up under Spartan discipline and institutions.¹³ Xenophon was, therefore, of the school of Socrates, where one learns by imitation in apprenticeship to the master. In the words of Croiset:¹⁴ "The life and works of Xenophon show in a perfect example what the Socratic education was able to produce in a nature that was healthy, moral, active, reasonable, a little earthly, and rather happily balanced than truly superior."

Socrates was to Xenophon a "guide, philosopher, and friend."¹⁵ Xenophon acquired from him some — perhaps many — of his principles for the conduct of life.¹⁶ From the fact, then, that Xenophon wrote the *Memorabilia* as a biography which is at once an expression of his own dearest ideals, a testimonial of his admiration of Socrates, and a tribute to him, and from the fact too that Xenophon was an ardent apprentice-disciple of Socrates, it becomes clear that the *Memorabilia* reflects principles that are certainly the principles of Xenophon.

¹H. G. Dakyns, *The Works of Xenophon* (in 4 vols.) London, 1890. III p. x. See also his discussion on pp. xl-xli. ²*Memorabilia* 1.6.14. ³*Ibid.* 1.4.19. ⁴*Ibid.* 1.3 and 4.8, as noted by S. R. Winans, *Xenophon's Memorabilia of Socrates*, Boston 1880, p. xvi. ⁵*Ep. ad Cn. Pomp.* 4.2, as quoted by Dakyns *op. cit.* i.xix, footnote 2. ⁶A. D. Lindsay, *Socratic Discourses by Plato and Xenophon*, Everyman's Library, London 1930, p. xi. ⁷E. C. Marchant, *Xenophon Memorabilia and Oeconomicus*, Loeb Series, London 1923, p. xi. ⁸R. D. C. Robbins, *Xenophon's Memorabilia of Socrates*, New York 1869, pp.

xxxiv-xxxvi. Compare R. C. Jebb, *Greek Literature*, Literary Primers, pp. 109-110 and A. T. Murray, *The Anabasis of Xenophon*, Chicago 1914, p. viii. ⁹H. G. Dakyns, *op. citat.* III p. xxii. J. Marshall, A. and M. Croiset, A. D. Lindsay, S. R. Winans, J. R. Smith (*Xenophon Memorabilia*, New York 1903), and R. D. C. Robbins can, in a general way, be said to support the opinion. The matter is well argued by Robbins, *op. citat.* pp. xxiv-xxvi. ¹⁰A. D. Lindsay, *op. citat.* p. x. ¹¹*Ibid.* p. ix. Compare Robbins, *op. citat.* p. xxxv. ¹²J. Marshall, *Memorabilia*, Oxford 1890, pp. xxvii-xxviii. ¹³Winans, *op. citat.* p. xii. Compare Jebb, *op. citat.* p. 113. ¹⁴A. & M. Croiset: *Histoire de la Littérature Grecque*, 5 vols., Paris 1876, IV. 338-339. ¹⁵Marshall, *op. citat.* p. iv. ¹⁶Croiset, *op. citat.* iv. 337-441; 351.

Thucydides the Man

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Every student of the ancient classics experiences at one time or another a desire to penetrate beyond the printed page into the mind of its author, to get at and understand the man behind the book. He desires to see the living personality of Cicero or Sophocles or of the flame-like Sappho, and not just the children of their minds.

Happily this need has been supplied in regard to many of the Greek and Roman masters, but one of the most outstanding and provocative of ancient writers still remains for the most part an enigma. While the weakness and grandeur of the character of Marcus Tullius are, thanks to his frank self-portraiture, as familiar to us as the personal foibles of a contemporary, Thucydides is known to us only as an amazingly concise recorder of one of the world's decisive wars, a man who had a hazy ancestry, a gold mine in Thrace, and possibly a violent death. The few morsels of actual information about him which we possess are only fleeting waters for a thirsty Tantalus, while the fables of his well-meaning but imaginative early biographers in the light of modern research are merely dreams. Thucydides can become known to us in one way alone, that is, by the careful and meditative perusal of his history with the aim constantly dominant of wanting to know the man behind that history.

The results of such a perusal, while necessarily negligible on the factual side, will be satisfying in the accurate picture they will offer of the man's character — what manner of man he was. This may sound unlikely or even paradoxical: for if anything is unique about Thucydides' history, it is the almost total absence of any mention of himself, or of any intentional self-revelation. The man is, nevertheless, thoroughly delineated in his work. So much so that we can almost call up his image before us, see him at work in Athens, listen to his scholarly conversation, and even perhaps spy a gleam of the workings of his inner mind and see in them the high integrity of his ethical code.

First and above all Thucydides was a scholar in the most exacting sense of the term. The standard which he sets himself in the first book is only less impressive than the scrupulous precision with which he adheres to it.

I have thought it right to set down the events of the war not as reported by any chance informant, nor as they seemed probable to me, but only after investigating with the utmost accuracy every detail, as well in the case of events in which I myself had a part, as in those about which I got my information from others. (1.22)

And we can believe him when he complains, "but these facts were ascertained only at the cost of laborious toil" (*Ibid.*). He sought to achieve, he says, "an everlasting possession" for humanity, and as we visualize him going

to the sources, comparing reports, sifting out false records, verbally bludgeoning perhaps the true facts from chance witnesses — all of which he must have done to achieve his geography, his minute enumeration of forces, and laborious chronology — one facet of his character becomes clearer. We are on our way to knowing the man.

Closely allied to his scholarship is Thucydides' intense love for the truth, a passion which led him into a kind of unpolemical agnosticism which, one might easily believe, he was tempted to enshrine as his personal religion. This skeptical spirit caused him to be rather impatient of poetic fancy and traditional superstition, as is illustrated by his somewhat contemptuous analysis of the ancient oracle:

"A Dorian war shall come, and with it pestilence (or famine?)" (2.54),

and by his lengthy correction of the popular tradition about the tyrannicides, Harmodius and Aristogeiton (1.20; 6.53-59). Always, he aims at the strict truth in its integrity, and if the honor of any state or individual need be sacrificed to this ideal, it is immolated without hesitation. It is with a feeling of personal injury almost that he writes:

So little painstaking is the generality of men in the quest of truth — they prefer to turn to what is ready at hand (1.20).

His desire for absolute truth led him into serious reflection upon political philosophies, which he investigated with keen penetration, arriving at his conclusions only after mature reflection on the causes and effects of political events. That he was a democrat, though a passionate hater of demagogues, is perfectly patent before the history is half read. His profession of faith in democracy, as stated in the funeral oration of Pericles (2.37), seems unmistakably final and sincere. That he was realist enough to see the weaknesses of popular government in the concrete is clear from his treatment of Cleon and his derogatory view of the Athenian crowd and its fickleness and stupidity. So much is this the case that he admits that the government of the Five Thousand was "during its early days the best which the Athenians ever enjoyed within my memory" (8.97). Yet, his ideal of enlightened democracy remained the same, and his crushing appraisal of oligarchy (8. 89-91) can leave no doubt as to his inmost feelings.

From this ability to modify his ideals in the light of practical experience, we can learn more about this man's character. He was a real thinker with a rare ability to penetrate beneath the surface of individual facts and formulate universal laws; a dramatist who could reach an intensity in the Sicilian Tragedy that approximates poetry, and yet, an immovable realist, who never lost touch with actualities or soared beyond the bounds of human potentialities.

This understanding of the powers and weaknesses of mankind is one of his outstanding traits. He is truly "humanist." Here, indeed, was a keen observer of his fellow men, each individually, so that he could etch their characters with sure, clean-cut strokes, as he does those of Themistocles (1.128) and Pericles (2^{passim}) and Nicias (7^{passim}). But, more than that, he was a profound student of human nature with a sure insight and unfailing accuracy that enabled him to go directly to the heart of underlying motives with a wonderful breadth of

comprehension and understanding and a notable lack of any bitterness or sardonic criticism. He had learned what is most sublime and most despicable in "the noble, lawless savage of God's intellectual creation", and so recorded what man has done in the light of what man is. Thucydides was a seer.

Virtue and right living elicited his sincere admiration, even when they were found in a Nicias (7.86), whose superstition and religious scruples must have been a source of annoyance to the historian; and from this we can deduce that he himself was, almost certainly, a man of high character.

That this man was a passionate admirer of Athenian culture and its civilizing effect upon mankind, while he had the most heartfelt contempt for barbarism, is clear at every turn — most markedly in the speech of Pericles (2.41.sq.), wherein he styles Athens "the school of Hellas." This panegyric is a remarkably clear statement of the best of the Greek theory of communal living. Its whole tenor reveals the historian as a man of rare culture and studied refinement, as well as a lover of learning. Thucydides must have possessed the charm and ease of social intercourse which are the infallible marks of the "gentleman," the aim of a liberal education. The almost incidental remark that good citizenship is based on the family (1.44) is very interesting and suggests that its author must himself have possessed a deep sense of ancestral *pietas*.

But perhaps the most striking single gift of the historian is his ability to write in an entirely objective spirit with the precision and scientific exactitude possible only to those few great men who are able to achieve absolute detachment from self in their contemplation of human life — that rare quality which can be justly called "the sanctity of literature." This is the hallmark of Thucydides' power. He occupied an eminence above the common run of mankind and, from the vantage point of his soaring intellect, observed the relationship and strife of all the parts which fit into the integral whole that is humanity. This was a great man.

Such, then, is the picture Thucydides gives of himself. We might wish that the lines were clearer and the colors more vibrant, but we have, at least in sketch, a true representation of the man as he was, when twenty-four hundred years ago, he sat down in Athens and wrote a book.

Roman Panorama, A Background for Today, by Humfrey Grove-Hodge, M.A., the Macmillan Company, New York, 1947. Pp. 260. \$2.88

This volume, as its title suggests, is a brief survey of Roman history. It is written in an interesting style by a teacher of long experience and fine literary and scholarly tastes. *Roman Panorama* is divided into five parts. The first part (one chapter) treats of the Latin language, its origin and connection with other languages, and its influence on English. The second part, entitled "Rome," contains four interesting chapters dealing with the setting of Rome, its topography and geography; the City, with its seven hills and its gradual growth and development; then (in two brief chapters, succinct, clear and full of information) the Constitution and the Magistrates. "The Romans Abroad" is the heading of part three, which discusses the conquest of Italy and the world, the

Provinces, the Empire, and the Army. Part four, "the Romans at Rome", is stored with interesting details in brief compass of Roman social and private life, of men and women, children and slaves, the gods, the Roman house, palaces and slums, the daily round of work and play. The title of part five is "Roman Remains," with one chapter (Past, Present and Future) dealing with Rome's legacy in her literary portraits, Livy, Caesar and Cicero, Virgil and Horace.

We highly recommend this volume as a handbook for every Latin teacher, affording useful information and inspiration. It could be adopted as a text-book for a course in Roman History. To the general reader who wishes to acquaint himself with the story of Rome and its legacy to the modern world, we can suggest no better one-volume work. To one who wishes to review his Roman history this little book, we feel, will be a delight.

A. A. J.

In the *Twenty-Second Annual Interscholastic Latin Contest* held on December 7, 1948 and participated in by all Jesuit high schools of the Mid-West states, the following awards have been announced: (1) D. P. Solon of Campion, (2) J. Lechner of Creighton High, (3) T. F. Marsh of St. Ignatius, Cleveland, (4) J. Rooney of Loyola High, Chicago, (5) C. Nolan of St. Ignatius, Chicago, (6) G. R. Miltz of Xavier High, Cincinnati, (7) T. G. Lyons of Campion, (8) J. Egan of Creighton High, (9) R. J. Disselhorst of Loyola High, Chicago, and (10) *ex aequo* S. Kosidowski of Marquette High and L. Schnierer of St. Ignatius, Chicago.

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